

IV. COMPOSITION AND ORIGINS OF THE PRESENT TRIBE

101 The term Tanala means simply "People of the Forest." It is
619 applied to all the inhabitants of a certain stretch of territory irrespec-
tive of their origins and political affiliations. There has never been
a Tanala tribe, if that term is used in the sense of a socially or politi-
cally integrated group.

618 In order to understand the composition of the Tanala, it is neces-
sary to have some knowledge of the native social organization. The
various social units are based on a combination of two factors, com-
mon descent and common residence. The smallest unit, aside from
the individual family, is the lineage, a localized group of relatives who
claim descent from a single ancestor in the male line. This unit
occupies a certain part of a village and usually holds its lands in
common. Lineages which have few children, or which have been
decimated by disease or otherwise weakened, pass out of existence.
Strong lineages increase steadily in numbers and finally secede from
the village and found a village of their own. By imperceptible degrees
the lineage becomes a gens, new lineages springing up within it and
618 new villages being founded. Throughout the whole process territorial
631 unity is maintained. A lineage which moves too far away from its
parent village soon loses touch and becomes a separate unit. Some-
times the gens remains politically independent and continues to grow
and occupy more and more territory until it becomes a tribe. More
often, however, the tribal groups are made up of several gentes
which have been brought together by conquest, or by alliance against
some common enemy. There is usually no strong central control in
such a tribe and individuals feel much more closely bound to their
gentes than to the larger unit. Gentes may belong to different tribes
at different periods and a lineage from one gens may secede entirely
and go into the territory of another tribe, with which it will, in time,
become incorporated.

618 Actually, the composition of the Tanala seems to have been con-
stantly changing, various groups entering and leaving the territory,
166 shifting their residence and alliance within it, expanding or contract-
ing and often disappearing. This state of flux was stimulated by
the local conditions. The gentes were usually small and were almost
always at war with each other. A strong group of invaders could
easily displace or conquer the natives, while weak immigrants, who
entered peacefully, would be welcomed by any resident group for

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the addition to its man power. These alliances were aided by the common language of the natives and immigrants and by the great number of cultural features which they always had in common. Lastly, the region was never densely inhabited and the rapid, if temporary, exhaustion of the soil through the native methods of agriculture prevented the population from becoming too firmly fixed in one place. [241]

The Tanala always have been, and still are, a more or less accidental agglomeration of groups of diverse origin who have entered the territory at different times. Although all of them have numerous cultural features in common and speak mutually intelligible dialects, they cannot be said to resemble each other more closely than the various units, individually, resemble certain of the units in neighboring tribes. In spite of this, the term Tanala seems to have more than a geographical significance for the natives themselves. They have a rather shadowy sense of unity, which is strongest in the case of gentes living close together. This is reflected in the different attitudes toward Tanala and foreign slaves and in the clear distinction between gentes which are Tanala and those which are not. Any informant can instantly place any gens which he has heard of as being inside or outside the tribe. Moreover, within the tribe there are certain large divisions, not necessarily political units, which are universally recognized. Apparently membership in the tribe is based mainly on length of residence in the territory. Any group which has lived in the region more than three or four generations is counted Tanala. 619

The Tanala themselves recognize two main divisions of the tribe, the Tanala Menabe, who occupy the northern part of the territory, and the Tanala Ikongo, who occupy the southern part. The Ikongo take their name from Mount Ikongo, about 8 kilometers from Port Carnot. Sadaro Antoine says: 631

"Mount Ikongo was the refuge of all the inhabitants of the [southern] forest region in time of war. The top was level and could only be reached by one path, narrow and difficult. It was cultivated, providing food during sieges. This mountain was never conquered by the Imerina. The top was divided into two parts, Ananjamanga on the northeast and Tsiajopangango on the south. On the southwest corner of Ananjamanga, called Mitikoa, there was a small, rocky hill where the ancient inhabitants sacrificed an ox to their ancestors for protection and victory before going to battle. This hill was shaped like a cattle tick, *koaga*, and gave the name Ikongo to the mountain." 722

619 Tanala Menabe informants could give lists of the gentes within their
 618 own tribe and of lineages within their gens, but knew little about the
 composition of other units. In the following tabulation, worked out
 from the manuscript, the tribes have been given at the extreme left,
 gentes next and more or less independent sub-gentes next. Undoubt-
 edly some of the latter would be considered gentes by informants from
 within the next larger division. The Zafirambo, or royal caste,
 considered themselves a gens, but were distributed through the
 territory of several tribes.

TANALA IKONGO

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TRIBE	GENS	SUB-GENS
Manambondro	Schaventa	
	Antandruka	
	Anta-Varandruka	Anta-Femurive Taimpodruka Sarodry Vohijaka
	Anta-Maromony	Anta-Be Taimponona Maitrimbaka Tikamono
Vohitrovy	Zafirambo	
	Anta-Be	
	Zafiraharaka	
	Vinampony	
Vohimena-Sakafina	Vohimena	Vohimena Zafimena Zafimpona Hava Vohimena
	Sakafina	
Marohala		
Zanamava	Zanamava	
	Schaventa	
	Taimpony	
	Taimbocira	
	Zafimpona	
	Schaventa	
Tanalandrovy	Anta-Taimpona	
	Antampony	
	Vohimena	
	Zafimpony	
	Anta-Ondry	
	Anta-Sika	
	Antampony	

DIVISIONS OF THE MENABE

- 631 The Tanala Menabe, the northern half of the forest dwellers, say
 619 that they belong to two main divisions, the Taimpony Ataimo and the
 Taimpony Varitra. The terms mean respectively "The Three Thou-
 sand of the South" and "The Three Thousand of the North." The

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various tribes composing the Telokivo Varitra were never united politically prior to the French conquest. Those of the Telokivo Atsimo were consolidated under a single rule about one hundred years ago. At this time the Zafakotry, a gens of the Matsandriana, were driven from their territory and appealed to the Imerina king, Andri-
 anampoinerina, for help. He aided them to reinstate themselves and finally, by persuasion rather than force of arms, they became the rulers of the whole division. Their capital was at Ambokimanga du Sud, which was given this name in honor of Ambokimanga, the old Imerina capital. They remained nominal vassals of the Imerina, under light control, until the French conquest.

TELOKIVO ATSIMO

Tribe	Clan	Sub-Clan
No name, but a single chief	Tsinia Tsinakaka Tsinakaka	
Mahafie	Mahafie	
No name, but a single chief	Favory or Maromona Favory Tsinakaka	
Tsinakaka-Tsinakaka	Tsinakaka	

TELOKIVO VARITRA

Tsinakaka	Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga	
	Maromona Tsinakaka	
	Tsinakaka	Tsinakaka Andriankaranga Favory Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga
Matsandriana	Tsinakaka	Tsinakaka (Royal) Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga (2) Andriankaranga (2) Andriankaranga (2)
	Matsandriana	Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga Andriankaranga

619 The preceding list of Manab divisions is based on the statements
6431 of several different informants. Chacha proved that no one of them
166 had an accurate knowledge of the composition of the whole group. Moreover, they usually failed to distinguish between language, sub-group and gens. All of them belonged to the Tazulawa Vectors and knew only the larger divisions of the Tazulawa Nations. The list is, therefore, both incomplete and inaccurate, but it is the best which could be gotten under the circumstances.

The Zashindawana claim descent from Zashindawana, who entered the northern Tazula territory from the Huron country eight generations ago, including the present. He had six daughters, from whom the six divisions of this tribe trace their descent. They found the country almost uninhabited. Later some people of Antimorona stock entered the region, but were absorbed by them. In recent times the Zashindawana were subject to the king of Anshimanga, who was also king of the Manabirana. They submitted voluntarily, on the advice of Antimangpimawina, founder of the Iowara empire. Prior to this union they had had no chiefs and no custom, being ruled entirely by their village councils and the heads of the lineages.

The Zashindawana entered the region from the plains in still more recent times, being forced out of their territory by war. They found some of their present divisions in the territory and incorporated them. Their culture is still largely of plains type.

The Zashindawana and Manabirana proper are of very mixed origin. Some of their sub-groupes claim Arab descent and most of them apparently came in from the east coast. In historic times the Zashindawana were the chief gens of the Manabirana confederacy. The kingship was vested first in the Zashindawana, later in the Zashindawana.

631 The sub-groupes in all the groups were small. The Zashindawana had
741 three villages of approximately fifty houses each, the Zashindawana, two of eighty houses each, and the Zashindawana, three of fifty houses each.

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descendants of inter-gene marriages which had been matrilineal (see 612 The Family), descendants of slave men and free women, etc. Such persons were attached to their mother's lineage. In the case of matrilineal marriages they would keep their father's taboos in the first generation, but if they married into their mother's gene, as was usually the case, their descendants would be considered full gene members. Individuals connected with the gene through female descent were entitled to use of its land and suffered from no disabilities except that they were debarred from a few offices which were strictly hereditary in the male line. The Ilunga paid more attention to male descent than the Menabe and in historic times their gene membership is said to have been strictly based upon it.

I believe that residence was originally almost as important as descent in establishing gene membership. Certain genes mentioned in traditions have completely disappeared and it was explained that, having lost their lands through conquest, they had broken up. Their Ilunga had settled in the villages of other genes, by permission, and had finally been absorbed.

Each gene was composed of from one to fifty villages all of which 618 recognized the domination of a single chief. Among the Menabe there 631 was rarely more than one gene represented in a village. Among the Ilunga, Ilunga belonging to the royal gene often lived in the villages of the other genes, but this was probably a late development, linked with the rise of royal power in that group.

SEXUAL CLASSES

Until about one hundred and twenty-five years ago the Menabe 567 recognized only two classes in society: the *hwa*, who were free persons belonging to a gene, and the *slaves*, who were prisoners of war or their descendants. There were no hereditary distinctions among the *hwa* [559] although differences in wealth and ability were, of course, recognized. Most of the *slaves* were *hwa*. Some distinction was made between *slaves* who were Tazala by birth and those captured from other tribes. The former would often be ransomed by their relatives and their bondage was, in general, lighter. Marriages between such *slaves* and free people were quite common, especially if the *slave* was a member of a good family in his own gene. At death, the body of a Tazala *slave* would be returned to his own gene for burial in his village tomb, unless his village lay at too great a distance. *Slaves*, both Tazala and foreign, were further divided into chattel *slaves* and family *slaves*. The former were usually prisoners of war, the latter

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the two lower classes among the Menabe is equally applicable to the Ikongo. There were, however, two gentes of Asoo rank. One of these, the Zaframbo, claimed Arab descent, the other, called simply Asoo, apparently was an offshoot of the Bara tribe. The Zaframbo established their claim to Asoo rank as follows (MSE. of Sadaro Antoine): "After Andriamarofela [head of the original lineage] had settled at Maromanditra, on the left bank of the Manambondro River, his descendants multiplied rapidly and soon occupied almost the whole Sandrananta valley. They were excellent warriors, respected by the neighboring gentes. They always occupied Sandrananta, but at a later time, when the neighboring gentes were constantly at war with each other, some of them asked the 'hova Zaframbo' of Sandrananta to govern them and put an end to strife. The children of Rabelaza and Rabenara [heads of the Vohitrao gens] constantly fought among themselves, wanting to be king. One of the sons of Rabelaza, called Tsinaky, went to Sandrananta to ask for a king. He was given Ramanavitry, who installed himself first at Ambalavolo and later at Vohibaloetra. Part of the Vohitrao gens was hostile to him and he conquered it, bringing the whole gens under his rule. The establishment of Zaframbo kings put an end to war, for no chief of the Vahoaka [original inhabitants] would dare to attack a gens governed by a Zaframbo. If he did, all the Zaframbo of Sandrananta would be against him. The Zaframbo kings married Vahoaka women and the two groups soon became a single family. It is for this reason that we now have Zaframbo and Vahoaka living in the same villages."

Under the Tanala system social class and gentile affiliation were inseparable. When a gens succeeded in dominating other gentes and making them recognize the control of its chief, or of chiefs of its blood, all members of the gens assumed noble rank. The bulk of the "nobles" would continue to live in their own territory and while their new status brought social prestige its economic value was almost nil. Their main duty in the state was to act as a police force, keeping peace among the subject gentes and protecting them from outside aggression. Among the Tanala the whole institution of nobility was relatively new and I could learn of no case in which a noble gens had lost its domination. Among neighboring tribes, who had essentially the same system, a noble gens which had been conquered was not degraded to the common level. Such gentes formed a class intermediate between nobles and commoners and retained a certain social prestige. They were distinguished by a class name and might have

VII. GOVERNMENT

In describing Tania government it is necessary to treat the Menabe and Ikongo divisions separately. Until about one hundred years ago the Menabe had no political or governmental unit larger than the gens. Later, with the aid of the Imerina empire, the Rafakotry gens succeeded in bringing several of the other gentes under its domination and a kingdom was established. This kingdom tried to copy the organization of the Imerina kingdom, but it never became well integrated or thoroughly organized. The Ikonga, on the other hand, had kingdoms of long standing and had developed a stable system of government with officials of varying rank.

THE MENABE

Among the Menabe each village was practically autonomous. The authority of the chief of the gens was recognized, but he never interfered in village affairs and was only appealed to in disputes between villages or in serious criminal cases. Each village had chief, the *Andriankonty*, who was elected informally and could be deposed at will. There were no ceremonies of investiture and he had no special insignia. He was considered simply the first among equals. To be eligible for the office a man had to be personally popular, rich, generous, a good diplomat, a good warrior and a good orator. The *Andriankonty* had no authority over the persons or property of the other villagers. His duties were to advise and help them, to act as arbitrator in minor disputes, if brought to him voluntarily, to organize and coordinate communal activities, seeing that labor and expenses were equitably divided, and to act as representative for his village in its dealings with other villages or with the chief of the gens. The office carried no salary or perquisites, beyond personal exemption from labor. Under French control the office of *Andriankonty* has been retained and its powers and its responsibilities considerably increased. He must provide the quotas of men demanded by the government for forced labor and cannot be deposed by the village without government consent. Duties of the *Andriankonty* are now common.

The affairs of the village were controlled by a group of important men, comparable to the "big men" of American communities. The position was unofficial and the natives seem to have had no generic term for such leaders. They are now referred to by the French word

125 The invaders lived in compact gentle groups, but in time certain families or lineages left the gene territory and settled among the aborigines, gaining control. These small ruling groups kept touch with their parent gene for a time and relied on it for support, but they intermarried with their subjects and fused with them racially and culturally. Their descendants in the male line came to constitute a noble caste with representation in all the groups. Although these nobles claimed a common origin and were jealous of their social privileges they no longer considered themselves as a political unit. Although they would assist each other if the commoners rose against them, they frequently fought among themselves, leading their followers of aboriginal stock against each other. Even in such wars they still recognized the blood bond to the extent that it was taboo for a commoner to kill the enemy king, although a noble would do so without hesitation (see Warfare).

621 Apparently there were many foreign villages which did not include lineages of *hona* ("noble") caste. Even when they were present their influence was not preponderant in local affairs. The village government was essentially the same as the *Matsaha*. There was an elected chief, usually not a noble, who acted as executive, and a *Felondona* ("council"). Each gene had a chief called the *Mpanaka* who was elected from the members of the *hona* caste. Precedents for the office were the same as for the *Matsaha* *Ambodirina*. The *Mpanaka* was chosen by the village chiefs and *Nandika* of the noble gene, irrespective of caste, and could be deposed at will. Associated with him were one or more officials called *Ambodirina*, who were elected on the same basis and in the same way as the *Mpanaka*, but must be of noble ("noble") caste. Theoretically the *Ambodirina* acted as executives and executives, but actually they often seem to have had as much power as the *Mpanaka*, who was unable to remove them from office. The whole arrangement strongly suggested a dual chiefdomship.

621 Kingship arose, as among the *Matsaha*, through one gene acquiring dominance over others. The king, also called *Mpanaka*, was chosen from among the *hona* of the dominant group. Like the gene chiefs, he was assisted by elected *Ambodirina* whom he could not dismiss. These *Ambodirina* might be chosen from any gene within the kingdom, but were always of noble caste. Usually all genes were represented among them and they formed a sort of permanent council with a sharp check on the conduct of the *Mpanaka*. They carried executive functions and continued in office